

***Rubus canadensis* - (*Rubus idaeus* ssp. *strigosus*) / *Athyrium filix-femina* - *Solidago glomerata* Shrubland**

COMMON NAME	Smooth Blackberry - (Red Raspberry) / Lady Fern - Skunk Goldenrod Shrubland
SYNONYM	High Elevation Blackberry Thickets
PHYSIOGNOMIC CLASS	Shrubland (III)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBCLASS	Deciduous shrubland (III.B)
PHYSIOGNOMIC GROUP	Cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2)
PHYSIOGNOMIC SUBGROUP	Natural/Semi-natural (III.B.2.N)
FORMATION	Subalpine or subpolar cold-deciduous shrubland (III.B.2.N.b)

ALLIANCE                      *Rubus allegheniensis* - *Rubus canadensis* Shrubland Alliance

CLASSIFICATION CONFIDENCE LEVEL      2

USFWS WETLAND SYSTEM              Upland

RANGE

**Globally**

This forest occurs at high elevations in the southern Appalachian Mountains of North Carolina and Tennessee.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

This community was sampled on the summit of Mount Le Conte on the Mount Le Conte quadrangle. It was not sampled, nor is it expected, on the Cades Cove quadrangle, although it may occur in other areas of the Park.

ENVIRONMENTAL DESCRIPTION

**Globally**

This vegetation results from severe disturbance of spruce - fir forests (*i.e.* Balsam Woolly Adelgid-affected stands), as well as exposed sites with other frequent natural disturbance. It occurs on exposed summits and high slopes, typically at elevations over 6000 feet.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

See above

MOST ABUNDANT SPECIES

**Globally**

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree Canopy	<i>Abies fraseri</i> (dead)
Tall shrub	<i>Rubus canadensis</i>

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

<u>Stratum</u>	<u>Species</u>
Tree Canopy	<i>Abies fraseri</i> (dead)
Tall shrub	<i>Rubus canadensis</i> , ( <i>Diervilla sessilifolia</i> )
Herbaceous	( <i>Athyrium filix-femina</i> ssp. <i>asplenoides</i> , <i>Solidago glomerata</i> )

CHARACTERISTIC SPECIES

**Globally**

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

*Rubus canadensis*, *Diervilla sessilifolia*, *Athyrium filix-femina* ssp. *asplenoides*, *Solidago glomerata*

VEGETATION DESCRIPTION

**Globally**

High elevation Appalachian *Rubus* thickets resulting from death of *Abies fraseri* or shrub invasion of grazed fire meadows. Differs from *Rubus* thickets on grassy balds by predominance of forbs rather than sedges and by frequent presence of *Rubus idaeus*. Long-term future of this community is uncertain, but it appears to be fairly stable over periods of several decades. Standing dead *Abies fraseri* are frequent. Scattered living *Picea rubens*, *Sorbus americana*, *Betula allegheniensis*, and *Amelanchier laevis* may occur.

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

This is successional vegetation on the summit of Mount Le Conte resulting from the death of *Abies fraseri*. Vegetation is variously dominated by *Rubus canadensis* and *Diervilla sessilifolia* (on the most exposed sites), by dense *Rubus canadensis*, or by dense *Athyrium filix-femina* ssp. *asplenoides* and *Solidago glomerata* (on more protected sites). Standing dead trees tower above the shrubs and herbs, and there is much downed woody debris. Other species present include *Abies fraseri*, *Agrostis perennans*, *Angelica triquinata*, *Aster acuminatus*, *Carex brunnescens*, *Carex crinita*, *Carex intumescens*, *Carex debilis*, *Cinna latifolia*, *Clintonia borealis*, *Danthonia compressa*, *Oxalis montana*, *Picea rubens*, *Prunus pensylvanica*, *Rugelia nudicaulis*, and *Sorbus americana*.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY SPECIES

No information

CONSERVATION RANK                      GM

RANK JUSTIFICATION

This community represents an altered vegetation type, modified by the effects of an alien pest species. Examples of this vegetation once represented what is now a globally rare and critically imperiled community that has an uncertain future. This modified vegetation is now a natural part of high elevation landscapes in the southern Blue Ridge and an important part of the functioning landscape, providing habitat for many southern Appalachian species. For conservation planning purposes, examples of this community may be best considered low quality occurrences of forests in the *Abies fraseri* - (*Picea rubens*) Forest Alliance.

DATABASE CODE                      Cegl003893

COMMENTS

**Globally**

**Great Smoky Mountains National Park**

This community grades into *Abies fraseri* / *Viburnum lantanoides* / *Dryopteris campyloptera* - *Oxalis montana* / *Hylocomium splendens* Forest (CEGL006049).

REFERENCES

None